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FM AMEMBASSY BEIRUT
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC 4934
INFO RUEHEE/ARAB LEAGUE COLLECTIVE
RHEHNSC/WHITE HOUSE WASHDC
RUCNDT/USMISSION USUN NEW YORK 3801
RHEHAAA/NSC WASHDC

UNCLAS SECTION 01 OF 02 BEIRUT 000565

SIPDIS

SENSITIVE

STATE FOR NEA/FO, NEA/ELA, NEA/PI
ALSO FOR IO A/S BRIMMER
P FOR DRUSSELL, RRANGASWAMY
USUN FOR WOLFF/GERMAIN/SCHEDLBAUER
NSC FOR SHAPIRO, MCDERMOTT
DRL/NESA FOR WHITMAN, BARGHOUT
OVP FOR HMUSTAFA
STATE PASS USAID FOR LAUDATO/NANDY/SCOTT

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [EAID](#) [PGOV](#) [PHUM](#) [SOCI](#) [KDEM](#) [KMPI](#) [LE](#)

SUBJECT: LEBANON: LEBANESE YOUTH COALITION AGAINST CORRUPTION

SUMMARY

¶11. (SBU) On Saturday May 9, 2009, a new anti-corruption movement, the "Lebanese Youth Coalition against Corruption" (LYCAC) was launched in Beirut. This coalition was launched by the Youth Civil Society & Leadership (YCSL) program as a joint initiative between the Lebanese Transparency Association (LTA) and the International Research and Exchange Board (IREX). The program focuses on mobilizing youth activists to strengthen advocacy and anti-corruption movement. In addition to lobbying Lebanese institutions to implement anti-corruption reforms, the LYCAC is implementing 28 anti-corruption projects in 38 Lebanese villages involving 325 youths and with beneficiaries from across the country. The LYCAC action plan to enhance the role of youths and civil society in monitoring the State is a first initiative of its kind in Lebanon. End summary.

IREX AND LTA LAUNCH THE "LEBANESE YOUTH COALITION AGAINST CORRUPTION" AND WIN OFFICIAL SUPPORT

¶12. (U) The International Research and Exchange Board (IREX) and the Lebanese Transparency Association (LTA) announced the launch of the "Lebanese Youth Coalition Against Corruption" (LYCAC). (Note: IREX is an international non-profit organization founded in 1968, to deliver cross-cutting programs and civil society development. LTA was established in 1999 as the Lebanon Chapter of Transparency International and is the first Lebanese anti-corruption NGO. End Note.) During the event, Peter Salloum, IREX Middle East Program Manager described the importance of this project in the Middle East.

The program, funded by the U.S. Department of State's Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor (DRL), aims to promote youth activist leaders to address corruption and bad governance.

¶13. (U) The project mobilizes youth leaders and empowers them with resources and skills to combat inefficient and corrupt governance in Lebanon, while providing small grants to support projects that encourage transparency and bridge sectarian divides. Nada Abdel Sattar, Head of the LYCAC Board of Trustees, said the movement will be a watchdog to fight corruption in the public sector and will foster youth capacity building to work towards a positive change in Lebanon. Interior Minister Ziad Baroud read President Sleiman's statement to the group, in which Baroud highlighted the President's support for transparency and accountability. The speeches were followed by presentations about the Youth Civil Society (YCS) project, which funds and implements 28 anti-corruption projects,

totaling around \$120,000, across different regions of Lebanon. The purpose of the grants is to bridge sectarian divides by involving youth activists in violence-prone geographical areas to implement anti-corruption and good governance projects.

FIRST LEBANESE ANTI-CORRUPTION
PARTNERSHIP BETWEEN GOL AND CIVIL SOCIETY

14. (SBU) By launching LYCAC, LTA and IREX aim to ensure the self-sustainability of this initiative through young leaders from different religious backgrounds across the nation towards the public good. The result of the project is the coalition, uniting local NGOs and including youth groups that participated in different Lebanese regions, by combating corruption and bridging divides. The conference provided an opportunity for youth civil society leaders across the country to share experiences, best practices, and lessons learned, while examining priorities and establishing next steps for the coalition. With the official support it has succeeded in receiving, the coalition is looking forward to play an active role of checks and balances with the public sector institutions. This DRL-funded project will expire in February 2010; however, the coalition, in cooperation with IREX and LTA, is currently examining strategies for sustainability and will explore various funding possibilities.

COMMENT

15. (SBU) The initiative, emerging from the youth and targeting youth, is the first anti-corruption coalition movement of its kind in Lebanon. The support that was expressed to this initiative from

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the local population of different religious, political and sectarian backgrounds indicates a common will across the country to change the status-quo, and work towards good governance. End Comment.

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